

REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 15, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Saaski. The Examiner rejected claims 3, 4, 6-10, 13, 14 and 16-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saaski, in view of Dykes. The applicant has amended claims 1, 6 and 21 to recite a flow restrictor that changes the direction of fluid a plurality of times to create a non-linear relationship between fluid pressure and flowrate. Claims 11 and 16 recite flow restrictor means for creating a non-linear relationship between pressure and flowrate. The corresponding structure for this means is a tube with multiple bends, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 of the drawings. Saaski does not disclose or suggest to provide a flow restrictor with enough bends to create a non-linear relationship between pressure and flowrate.

Saaski discloses a valve with a flexure that is attached to a substrate. The top surface of the flexure is exposed to the pressure of the fluid. The fluid pressure can push the flexure toward the regulator valve seat to change the height of the regulator gap. The non-linear relationship is created by varying the height of the regulator gap, not by changing the direction of fluid flow though a series of bends in the restrictor.

The Examiner points to Figures 10 and 11 of Saaski which show circular and serpentine channel configurations. Saaski is absolutely silent as to whether there is enough bends in these configurations to actually create a non-linear relationship between pressure and flowrate as recited in the claims in the above-entitled application. Therefore, Saaski does not anticipate these claims. Additionally, column 30, lines 38-45 of Saaski states that the circular, spiral or serpentine configurations are provided to make the regulator more compact. There is no teaching here to provide enough bends and corresponding changes in a fluid direction to create

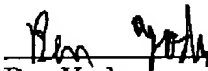
a non-linear relationship between pressure and flowrate. For this reason Saaski does not render obvious the recited claims.

In view of the above it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19 and 21 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
IRELL & MANELLA LLP

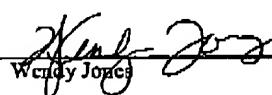
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent via  
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 3/23/04  
Wendy Jones Date